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COOPERATIVE PROGRAM DAY

Sunday, April 19

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Hunt: retirement doesn't slow life mission

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — The line of admirers waiting to hug, touch, and retrace history with the animated octogenarian snakes around the giant auditorium.

"Do you remember the time you got in such a hurry that you accidentally used bug spray on your hair instead of hair spray?" laughs Bruce Oliver, an emeritus missionary to Brazil.

"You tried to pay the senior citizen price when you bought ice cream in the Atlanta airport, and they didn't believe you were eligible," recalls Dale Hooper, now retired from the International Mission Board (IMB). "They even asked you to show your ID."

"I hope I look like you 25 years from now!" raves Eveline Miller, a longtime missionary to Nigeria.

To these devotees, Alma Hunt, 88, responds as though each were the only person she ever knew intimately in her vast career that took her to 93 countries and spanned almost nine decades of teaching, writing, and administering.

Affixing a giant kiss on the cheek on most everyone she greets — male or female — Hunt, known affectionately to most as "Miss Alma," turns aside to a bemused photographer and explains, "At this stage of life, I can kiss 'em all!"

The same wit, incessant zest for living, and unquenchable interest in people that distinguished Miss Alma's 26 years at the helm of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) remain her trademarks in her retirement years — or in her case, the 24 years since she's worked full time.

On March 10, Virginia Baptists named their annual state offering the "Alma Hunt Offering for Virginia Missions." Hunt is a native of Roanoke and has



GOING STRONG — Alma Hunt has been a supporter of Southern Baptist missions for more than 50 years. At 88, she continues to accept speaking engagements a year in advance and credits her stamina to the fact that "the Lord has given me the ability to sleep anywhere." (WMU photo)

spent the last 13 years of her retirement years there.

Current WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien told the group of present and retired missionaries gathered at Glorieta (N.M.) Conference Center for Miss Alma's emeritus missionary award, "No one deserves this honor more. She has stirred up the hearts of people in the Southern Baptist Convention to give and to pray for you."

Hunt attributes her resiliency through years of international travel to "the ability to sleep anywhere" and to her

iron stomach that sustained many unusual meals abroad.

Her travels were far from over after her retirement from WMU in 1974. The IMB asked her to be a consultant for women's work from 1975-78. She also was an officer with the Baptist World Alliance. The sprightly Hunt recorded 44 international assignments after she reached age 65.

"Alma can be a little exhausting to be around. I have never known anybody who had such enthusiasm for so many things," Letha Casazza, former president of North American Baptist Women's Union, wrote of Hunt.

At 88, Hunt has speaking engagements booked a year away, although she teases those who sign her for future engagements that they are "true optimists" for scheduling her long-range.

To help with her personal correspondence, WMU enables her to issue a letter, "Baptist Sisters Around the World," each year to missionaries in whose homes she stayed, to those she met through BWA and on international fields, and to other friends dear to her heart.

Hunt, whose first name means "soul" in Spanish, says her years since full-time employment "...have been a glorious period for me. I attribute the state of my health to the fact that I continue to prepare for speeches and travel. These things give purpose to my life."

Mindful of the many baby boomers nearing retirement in the next several decades, Hunt believes the untapped potential among older women is vast.

"Even if you don't have the physical strength, there are ways you can encourage — by phone or by writing notes," she explains.

"Retirees who are lonely are largely responsible for their loneliness, because through the church and the Christian family are opportunities for all of us to have a vital part in the ongoing of the kingdom."

SSB adds to Internet site

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The option to order undated materials was added to the Internet site of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, effective March 31.

More than 700 undated resources and more than 260 dated resources are available through electronic order forms at Internet address <http://www.bssb.com>.

Since Sept. 9 of last year, the Sunday School Board has offered on-line ordering of quarterly and monthly publications. Since that time, 5,615 personal identification numbers (PIN) have been requested and 14,588 orders for dated materials have been placed over the Internet.

Obtaining a PIN ensures security for the account and eliminates the need to provide billing information on-line.

Orders have ranged from a single copy of one title to more than 400 titles and more than 5,000 units of various literature items. Orders have come from across the United States as well as other countries.

Within 24 hours of submitting the order over the Internet, a confirmation of the order is returned by e-mail, including a list of the items ordered and anticipated shipping date.

Detailed instructions are provided on the Internet site by clicking on the "Online Order Form" graphic at the top of the homepage. Churches and individuals may request a PIN on-line or by calling (800) 575-7004.

Looking back

10 years ago

Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission (RTVC) in Ft. Worth vote to sell the ACTS television network to a new for-profit corporation, Friends of ACTS Inc. RTVC president Jimmy Allen tells trustees he will resign and manage ACTS for the new entity, if asked.

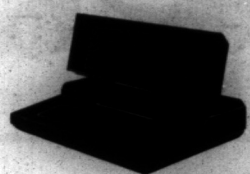
25 years ago

The Baptist Children's Village (BCV), based in Jackson, honors "Miss Ada" Farrow of the Belt Community by installing a plaque on the BCV campus in Tate County, formally dedicating the satellite facility as the "Farrow Manor Campus."

50 years ago

Wayne Coleman, Bobby Simmons, Billy Day, and Pete Evens, students at Mississippi College in Clinton, lead a youth revival at First Church, Belzoni. There are 14 additions and 10 baptisms. Three young men surrender to the ministry, and two young ladies surrender to mission work.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Is there hope for this generation?

Young people have taken a lot of blows lately. From the tragic school shootings in Pearl and Paducah and Jonesboro to the alarming reports of increasing drug use among younger and younger age groups, it often seems the news about American youth is all bad.

Television broadcasts and newspapers each day are filled to overflowing with tales of murder, rape, robbery, and uncountable property crimes such as car theft, grand larceny, and possession of stolen property.

More often than not, the video and photographs accompanying these news accounts depict a handcuffed young person being led to jail for the crime.

It's difficult today to grow up in a culture that elevates violence, validates addiction, and expiates dysfunction.

If you don't believe that's the state of modern American culture, watch a few days of network television, where talk shows provide a forum for mothers to defend sleeping with their daughter's boyfriends.

Take in a few nights of cable fare, where prison homosexual rape is graphically depicted and even the heroes are sociopaths.

Listen to pop radio for a sampling of lyrics such as: "...trade your innocence for experience; 'heaven' is a four-letter word."

Surf the Internet to find free sites dedicated to every imaginable human perversion, without any of those encumbering age-check requirements. Visit a local bookstore and peruse the readily-available coffee table books of naked children (tastefully photographed, of course).

Is there any hope for young people? Are they doomed to an earthly life of amoral emptiness and an eternal life of unfathomable darkness?

Take heart, because there is hope for this generation — always hope in our Baptist young people, who have proven time and again that they deeply love God and earnestly seek a life of righteousness grounded in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

That's why a record number of Mississippi Baptist college students from across the state have dedicated their 1998 summer — not to beer-drinking, bare-bottomed bikini bashes on Florida beaches — but to sharing the Gospel in some of the most spiritually-demanding places on Earth.

That's why two Mississippi Baptist Youth Nights must be booked each year — all the young people who come to praise the Lord cannot fit in one of the state's largest indoor facilities.

That's why the youth of Hebron Church in Amite County collected an album of love letters to their pastor on his 50th anniversary in the ministry.

That's why the youth of Roseland Park Church in Picayune last year raised enough money during the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions to purchase a pack horse for missionaries in Peru, who otherwise could not get over the mountains into areas that

remain unreached with the message of the salvation in Jesus Christ.

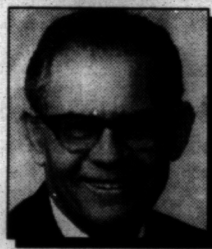
Yes, there is hope for this generation. Build them up and pray without ceasing that God will find them faithfully standing in the gap when it really counts (Ez. 22:30).

Given the culture they are inheriting from us, that's pretty much the only chance we've got.

"MISTER SAMUEL SAYS WHAT SHEEP DO BEST IS GET LOST. AND THAT'S WHY THEY NEED US."



GUEST OPINION:



Cooperative Program: My personal journey

By Bob Simmons, interim pastor
First Church, Livingston, Ala.

The explanation of what the Cooperative Program (CP) has meant to me must cover fifty years.

As we celebrate Cooperative Program Day on April 19, please journey with me through this Baptist pilgrimage.

In the beginning of my ministry, CP meant *preparation*.

After college I went to New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) in New Orleans to continue my studies.

Mary and I, just married, had little money and a \$40 monthly car note when we arrived in New Orleans.

We couldn't pay large fees to study there. No problem! CP support for the seminary made large fees nonexistent.

Through working and preaching, we were able to continue our education as long as necessary.

Soon, as I pastored some relatively small churches, CP came to mean *participation*.

My churches couldn't give large sums to missions and other Baptist needs.

Nevertheless, they could support all such efforts through regular CP giving.

At conventions and other gatherings, I felt as useful as other Baptists around me. I knew we were helping to support all Baptist work.

Later, I learned that our mis-

sion offerings also gave me participation in virtually every kind of missionary effort possible.

Our mission boards did comprehensive missions. Thus I had no need to give to independent missionary groups. No one did any kind of missions we didn't do.

For almost twenty years, Mary and I saw CP as *support*.

Serving for ten years in Southeast Asia, we felt secure as Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) missionaries.

We knew that more than 30,000 churches were combining their resources to support their missionaries in foreign lands.

Missionaries from other groups were not so fortunate as we FMB missionaries.

Their support came from only a few churches back home. Even that help usually was guaranteed for only a short time. These fine missionaries

had to make constant pleas to maintain home support.

One of our missionary friends suffered a sudden seizure. Following quick medical examination, she and her family were flown from Manila, Philippines, to New Orleans.

There she underwent brain surgery and remained in the U.S. for months before becoming able to return to the field.

Can you imagine any church or small group of churches being financially able to supply that one family's need?

We on the Southern Baptist missionary field never doubted that our 30,000 cooperating home churches could handle the situation. Through CP, they did.

Once, my NOBTS education had been made possible by the Southern Baptist plan for financing its total work.

Later, I spent nine years as one of the many teachers CP

provided to train the workers our churches needed.

I was privileged to end my active career feeling the same strong CP support that had given me my theological education long before.

James Sullivan, a native of Tylertown who served many years in Nashville as president of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, once called CP a "rope of sand." It is that!

No church is legally bound to support missions or any other ministry through CP.

If a church fails to give through CP, no Baptist convention leader at any level can even write a letter asking the reason for the failure.

What has therefore made CP's "rope" so attractive to Baptists?

First, it leaves every church independent. Then, it lets us cooperate with other Baptists we trust.

Finally, it allows generally like-minded believers to support the one cause dearest to us.

Many missionaries have climbed down our rope of sand since 1925. We must remember what makes that rope as strong as steel!

Simmons is a retired missionary and member of Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian.

'For Pastors Only' conference slated for April 23-24

A special "For Pastors Only" conference will be held April 23-24 at Eagle Ridge Conference Center at the Hinds Community College in Raymond. The conference is being sponsored by the Church Administration Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Registration will begin at 2 p.m. on April 23, with a general session beginning at 3 p.m. and breakout sessions set for 4 p.m.

After a supper break at 5 p.m., the second general session will begin at 7 p.m., followed by breakout sessions at 8 p.m. and adjournment at 9 p.m.

On April 24, worship will begin at 8:30 a.m., followed by special interest groups at 9 a.m.

The final general session will begin at 10:30 a.m., with adjournment at 11:30 a.m.

A golf tournament associated with the conference will begin at 1 p.m.

Scheduled speakers and their topics include:

- ♦ Mark Marshall, Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention: "Evangelism in Sunday School" in general session. "An Introduction to FAITH" and "Breaking the Leadership Barrier" breakout sessions. "Sunday School and the Generations" special interest group.

- ♦ David Wills, MBCB: "Developing an Outreach Strategy" breakout session. "Sunday School in the Internet

Age" special interest group.

- ♦ Tommy Mitchell, First Church in Pearl: "One Neighborhood at a Time."

- ♦ Ken Westbrook, Northwest Church in Gainesville, Fla.: "Breaking Barriers for Growth in the Sunday School" in general session. "Everyone Needs a Sunday School" and "Breaking the Numerical Barriers" breakout sessions. "Worker Training and Recruitment" special interest group.

- ♦ Matt Buckles, MBCB: "Breaking the Space Barrier" breakout session.

- ♦ Ed Deuschle and Richard Brogan, MBCB: "Breaking the People ('Different From Us') Barrier" breakout group.

- ♦ Larry Garner, Metro

Association in Jackson: "Fresh Approaches to Sunday School" special interest group.

- ♦ Reggie McNeal, South Carolina Baptist Convention: "Leadership in the Sunday School" in general session.

Limited lodging is available at Eagle Ridge. For more information and to register, contact Buckles at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST
Record

Mississippians see Romanian professions

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Randall Broome could not help but be silent as he gazed at the massive, blood-stained, marble columns in front of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Timisoara, Romania.

In that very spot nine years earlier, hundreds of citizens were massacred as they struggled to free their country from the control of the communist government.

"There is no freedom without bloodshed," a reflective Broome said as he and five other men from New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) stood on the steps of the ancient building.

"The country is free, but the people aren't, and they need to hear about the one who shed his blood for them," said Broome, a doctoral student from Sumrall.

During the seminary's spring break, March 12-23, evangelism professor Chuck Register took Broome and four other students to Romania to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching, teaching and personal witnessing.

At the end of the week, 116 people had prayed to receive Christ as their Savior.

Timisoara, considered "The Pearl of Romania" with its stately parks and lush gardens, still falls behind other, more modern, European countries.

A decade without communism has done little to erase governmental bureaucracy or restore initiative and creativity in the lives of the people, Register said.

Pollution, high taxes, substandard living conditions, lack of jobs and inadequate health

care are just a few of the problems the people face.

Yet, the people persevere and put their hope in something greater than the government, NOBTS mission team members said they observed.

"The people trust the Lord because that is all they've got and all they need," Broome said. "They have freedom to work, but there are no jobs."

Pastors in the tiny Eastern European country survive on about \$100 a month in very sparse living conditions, yet they continue to serve diligently, dedicated to telling fellow Romanians about Jesus, Register said.

Brian Tatum, a doctoral student from Picayune saw the dedication of Christians as he worshiped in several local congregations.

hymns in case the written word suddenly disappeared.

This practice is still encouraged by local pastors, Tatum said.

Romania was a focal point for the NOBTS group thanks to the help of Clay Moss, a student in one of Register's classes two years ago.

He and Register spoke of such a trip two years ago as Moss was taking classes in preparation for career service with the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) International Mission Board (IMB).

Currently, Moss is the volunteer coordinator for short-term mission projects in Romania for the IMB.

The group worked with Moss and Larry Carnes, another IMB missionary, in several capacities.

Most days were split between witnessing in the open-air markets within the city, crusade follow-up in the dorms of one of the universities with a group from Campus Crusade for Christ and personal evangelism training, as well as conducting evening revival services in local churches.

Overall, Romanians are warm and friendly, receptive to the gospel and developing an appreciation of God's Word, Register said.

One example came following a sermon by Register when a professor of philosophy and atheism at the University of Bucharest declared his faith in Jesus Christ.

Register said there are many prayer requests for Romania, specifically:

- ♦ evangelization of southern and eastern Romania, the pioneer areas of the country.

- ♦ the transition SBC missionaries go through when they arrive on the field and the conditions many face upon arrival.

- ♦ a sub-par health environment due to large amounts of pollution.

- ♦ Romanian pastors, most of whom have zero to very little formal theological education.

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Supreme Court Justice visits MC



Mississippi College (MC) President Howell W. Todd (right) leads U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia (second from right) and U.S. District Judge Charles Pickering (fourth from right), former president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, into Nelson Hall on the Baptist-affiliated school's Clinton campus for Scalia's April 7 address in Swor Auditorium. Scalia's visit marked the second time he keynoted an event at MC in the past three years, the first being his speech to a breakfast meeting of the MC School of Law's Christian Legal Society at First Church, Jackson. (Photo courtesy of Jessie Worley-Mississippi College)

Israeli religious censorship bill loses sponsor

TEL AVIV, Israel (BP) — The lawmaker who introduced a controversial religious censorship bill in Israel promised April 1 to actively oppose it after some 25 Christian groups pledged to "respect the identity and integrity" of Jews.

Messianic Jews and other Christians in Israel had been lobbying hard for more than a year against Zvilli's proposal to outlaw possessing, printing, importing, copying, or distributing literature of any kind "in which there is any form of an effort to persuade another to change one's religion."

Stanley recalls lessons from personal crisis

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Describing the last five years of his life as the most "painful" as well as "productive," Charles Stanley said prayer and meditation upon God's Word have been his salvation through the storm.

"There's not a pill in a bottle that will do for you when it comes to contentment, and relieving pressure, and bringing you a sense of quietness of spirit like stretching out before God in his Word, reading a passage, talking to him, being quiet and saying, 'Lord speak to my heart,'" Stanley told an overflow crowd March 31 at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Two years ago, Stanley found himself in a mounting controversy from a divorce suit filed nearly three years earlier by his wife, Anna.

Some church members, including his son, Andy, who served on staff at the church, thought Stanley should step down as senior pastor of the church until Stanley had reconciled his marriage.

Andy resigned from his staff position in August 1995 in disagreement over his



Stanley

father continuing to serve as senior pastor during the ordeal. Stanley, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, vowed to step down only if the divorce became final.

Anna dropped her divorce suit in March 1996, announcing that the couple were reconciling their differences.

"The most difficult painful years of my life have been the past five, but they have been the most profitable, the most productive in every single way," Stanley said.

"I thought what would have appeared to have caused people to walk away from me, drew them by the hoards.

"God broke me in areas of my own life that he knew I needed to be broken and crushed, because I wept for eight months every single day," Stanley said.

"What was God doing? Just getting me fit for some people to be able to listen to me who could not hear me before then."

Stanley, 65, said another lesson he learned through his ordeals is to "let God fight your battles.

"You fight your battles on your knees in your closet, and God will give you his victory in public," he said.

Stanley testified of the peace he had in August 1995 when he attended a three-hour business meeting with 5,300 church members who were considering firing him.

"I just sat there with the most perfect peace and quietness in my heart because, you see, I had already fought that battle. They were fighting it in public. I had fought it back in the prayer room. The battle was over as far as I was concerned," he said.

A vote showed 85% of the members supported Stanley remaining as pastor while he and Anna worked on their problems.

The next month, Stanley retreated to the North Carolina mountains, and when he returned home he told church members God wanted him to continue at the church.

Citing the Apostle Paul's admonition in 2 Corinthians 3 to operate out of one's inadequacy, Stanley said he learned anew how to depend on God for everything.

"If we learn to operate out of weakness, we don't have to defend our image. We don't have to try to impress anybody. We don't have to do any of that.

"All we have to do is do what God tells us to do," he said.

Intimacy with God, Stanley said, is the greatest safeguard against spiritual warfare.

Stanley said he is looking forward to many more years of fruitful ministry.

"Most men are retiring at my age. I have never been more excited in my whole life about the ministry than I am today," Stanley pointed out.

Christian businessmen — key to Last Frontier?

BRUSSELS, Belgium (BP) — Christian businessmen might be God's answer to sharing the gospel in hard-to-access countries of The Last Frontier.

Businessmen from the United States, Europe, Africa, and Asia heard this message as they met with scores of missionaries assigned to The Last Frontier at an undisclosed location, in early March.

The Last Frontier, also known as "World A," is made up of ethnic people groups that have little or no access to the gospel.

Clustered mostly in a swath that cuts across northern Africa, the Middle East and Asia, these people groups represent 2.7 billion people.

"Unfortunately, most churches see businessmen as dollar signs instead of trying to

use their skills for missions causes," said Os Hillman, an Atlanta advertising executive who has written several books on business and faith.

Last Frontier missions challenges present a vast opportunity for Christian businessmen

to serve, he declared.

Businessmen who want to explore Last Frontier opportunities may contact the initial contacts coordinator at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in Richmond, Va., toll-free at (888) 422-6461.

MC students put Spanish skills to good use

A pair of Mississippi College (MC) students have found a way to polish their Spanish skills while helping others.

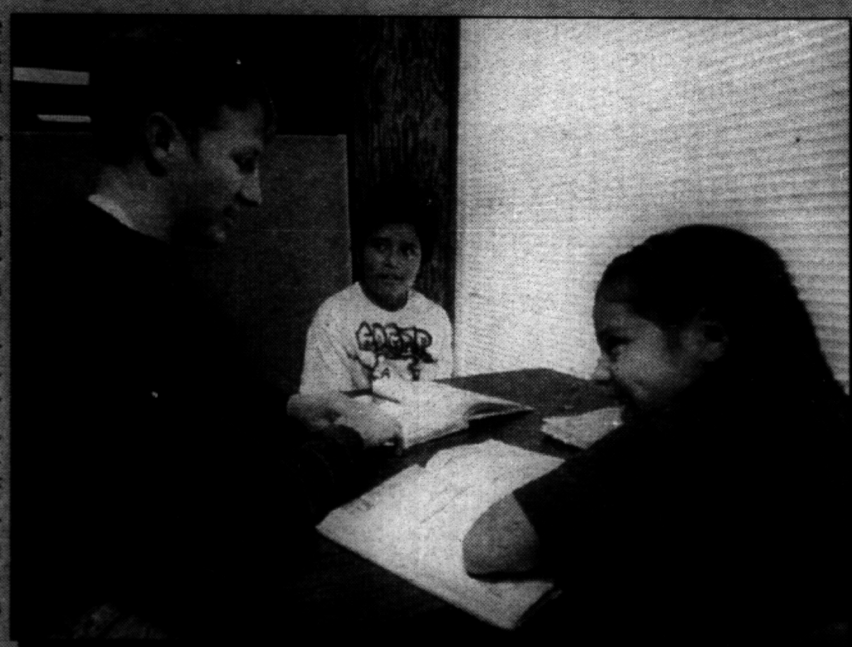
Stephanie Sumrall, a junior from Collierville, Tenn., and David Gibbs, a junior from Clinton, devote several hours each week to tutor Spanish-speaking students at Bovina Elementary School in Bovina.

Both students have completed several years of Spanish language instruction but rarely have the chance to practice it, so when Anita Gowin, MC professor of Spanish and chair of the department of foreign languages announced that Bovina was in need of Spanish-speaking tutors, Sumrall and Gibbs jumped at the opportunity.


Two of Bovina's third graders were from Hispanic background and spoke no English. Currently, Bovina has no Spanish-speaking teachers on staff, according to teacher Johnnie Marshall. "Since the MC students have been coming, I have already noticed a difference in my students' spelling skills. Just having an additional person for one-on-one tutoring has been a great help," Marshall said.

"It is really difficult to find time to go over there each week, but we both want to keep going," said Sumrall. Gibbs agreed and said that the time he spends each week with the students makes the commitment worthwhile.

"Both of the elementary students are doing better and you can see the accomplishments," he said. "I think it is time well spent," she said. Both Sumrall and Gibbs also hope the experience will prove useful in a future career. Nursing major Sumrall and international business major Gibbs both see the ability to speak a second language as an asset.



HABLA ESPANOL? — Mississippi College (MC) student David Gibbs (left) explains a Spanish lesson to unidentified Bovina Elementary School students during special tutoring classes sponsored by MC at the elementary school. (BR special photo)




AWAKEN AMERICA

Let's Put God in America Again!

GRENADA HIGH SCHOOL

Monday, April 27, 1998 - 7:00 p.m.



DR. RONNIE W. FLOYD

Volunteers preserving Spurgeon's library

LIBERTY, Mo. (BP) — Wearing cloth gloves, they pore over their subject, risking disease at every turn.

They work cautiously, knowing one false move could destroy the delicate material.

Are they scientists unraveling the mystery of an obscure malady? No, they're archeologists of sorts, preserving and repairing volumes from the private library of the great Baptist pastor Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

The Friends of the Spurgeon Library (FOSL) are volunteers from all over the U.S. who diligently work to restore the books of Victorian minister Spurgeon, who lived from 1834 to 1892.

Some of the books date back to the late 1400s; most are in desperate need of repair.

"Many of the books are infected with a fungus that spreads to nearby books and to those handling the books," said

Jerry Cain, vice president and chaplain of William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., where the collection is housed.

In fact, Mary Henry, who rebinds the books, went to the hospital after coming in direct contact with the fungus. Fortunately, antibiotics cleared the infection.

To protect the handlers and other books, contaminated books are wrapped in a special paper until they can be rebound. Currently, the volunteers repair about 50 volumes per year.

Housed on the lower level of William Jewell College's Curry Library, the Spurgeon collection contains 6,618 volumes, including many of Spurgeon's personal works, as well as those of other noted Christian writers.

Spurgeon was one of the most prominent English Baptist pastors of the 19th century. In 1859, he preached in the Crystal

Palace in London to a congregation of 23,654 people.

The collection is regarded as the world's finest library of Puritan literature. Among its treasures is the first edition serial "All the Year Round," a weekly journal published by author Charles Dickens.

The library also contains:

- ◆ Collections of hymns by Issac Watts, John Rippon and Samuel, and John and Charles Wesley.

- ◆ Editions of the Bible including the Englishman's Greek New Testament, which provides the Greek text and interlinear literal translation, and The Prefaces to the Early Editions of Martin Luther's Bible, which illustrate the reformer's principle of "justification through faith."

The oldest book in the collection is a commentary on the Book of Psalms by Cardinal

Juan de Torquemada; it is written in Latin and was published in Rome in 1476.

William Jewell College secured the Spurgeon Collection in 1906. During the sessions of the Missouri Baptist General Association (now the Missouri Baptist Convention) in 1905, it was announced that the personal library of Charles Haddon Spurgeon was available for purchase in London for 500 pounds.

In less than 10 minutes, Jewell negotiated to buy the collection and have it transferred to the Liberty campus.

A replica of Spurgeon's personal library serves as the focal point of the collection. After cataloging the entire collection, the volunteers are concentrating on restoring the volumes that line the shelves around the desk.

For more information, write to William Jewell College, 500 College Hill, Liberty, MO 64068.

Southern adds Boyce prof

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — North Carolina pastor Mark A. Howell is joining the faculty of the new James P. Boyce College of the Bible at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, officials of the Louisville, Ky., seminary announced April 6.

Howell, who will be assistant professor of preaching and pastoral ministries for the new college, currently is pastor of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Greensboro and an adjunct professor of homiletics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Approved by seminary trustees last October, the new college is set to begin operations Aug. 1.

Howell joins Ted Cabal and Hal Ostrander, who were introduced earlier this year as the inaugural faculty for the new college, and North Greenville (S.C.) College professor Charles W. Draper, whose appointment the seminary announced March 18.

University's Bible museum a 'holy time machine'

HOUSTON (BP) — Houston Baptist University has built a holy time machine, which travelers enter through the pages of aged Bibles.

Its Bible in America Museum presents the story of Scripture on these shores through a collection of some of the oldest Bibles printed on this continent.

The university obtained the collection, which contains more than 500 volumes, last year from Jonathan Byrd of Indianapolis.

Byrd spent decades drawing together the second-largest collection of 17th- and 18th-century Bibles in the country, eclipsed only by the American Bible Society, said Jerry Wiles, HBU assistant vice president for church relations, who helped acquire the collection.

The collection is important because the Bibles and the stories of how they were published reveal the history of Scripture and faith in America, university President Doug Hodo said.

Today, visitors to the university's museum can see some of those historic Bibles and learn more about how faith progressed through the "trials and fires" of publication, Hodo said.

The collection includes:

- ◆ The oldest existing copy of the oldest New Testament in America, the Francis Bailey New Testament, published in 1780.

- ◆ A copy of the first English Bible published in America, the Aitken Bible, printed in 1782.

Prior to that time, English Bibles were not published in the colonies because the English monarchy held the copyright on the King James Version, an immensely popular translation first published in 1611.

Hodo said the Aitken Bible is his favorite piece in the collection because it was financed by a \$50,000 grant from the Continental Congress.

"It does my heart good to know the American public paid for the publishing of a Bible, which would never happen in today's climate," he reflected.

- ◆ A copy of the Thompson Bible, the first English Bible translated from the Greek Septuagint.

- ◆ A replica of the first book published in English in America, a book of psalms.

- ◆ "First editions of every significant Scripture published in America," Wiles said.

- ◆ Original copies of Noah Webster's spellers, dictionaries, and textbooks, which include numerous Bible lessons.

- ◆ Original copies of the Journals of Congress, the Federalist Papers and other documents from the period.

- ◆ A copy of the Columbian Bible, published in 1792. Its preface refers to the "United States of Columbia," incorrectly predicting the name of the new nation.

"Not a lot is known about the history of the Bible in America," Wiles said. "When people understand the (human) price that was paid for it, we will have greater appreciation for it."

"We see this collection as a springboard for challenging people to read the Bible, to share it."

Because copies of the Bible are so abundant, Christians today may be tempted to take it for granted, but that should not be the case, Hodo noted.

Survey ties gambling to homelessness

WASHINGTON (BP) — Nearly one in five people at the country's rescue missions say gambling has played a part in their homelessness, according to a recent survey.

A survey of more than 1,100 men and women at gospel missions nationwide found 18% of respondents cited gambling as a cause of their homelessness. The polling also showed 70% of respondents believe the prevalence of gambling opportunities makes it difficult for them to rebuild their lives. Though they are homeless, 37% said they occasionally gamble. Eighty-six percent said they consider gambling addictive.

Lotteries far outdistanced other forms of gambling by respondents in the rescue missions. Those who used to play, or still play, lotteries totaled 86%, contrasted with 34% at casinos and 25% at horse and dog racing tracks, the survey showed.

The results of the survey, conducted by the International Union of Gospel Missions, were released only four days before the National Gambling Impact Study Commission began its March 16-17 meeting at Boston. The panel was expected to consider the impact of state lotteries by focusing on the Massachusetts lottery.

"This survey confirms what any honest person would admit — lotteries are bad business and bad public policy," said Barrett Duke, gambling specialist for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "One hundred years ago, our country dealt with lotteries and banned them in every state. Today, history is repeating itself."

"Our own states are destroying the people they are supposed to be protecting through their insatiable appetite for more spending money. The time has come for the people of this country to say, 'Enough is enough,' and to begin to elect legislators who will end this tragedy. If we don't do it soon, it may be someone we know on the streets next," Duke said.

The survey was conducted because of increasing reports from missions of the devastating effects of gambling in lotteries and at casinos on people's lives, according to the International Union of Gospel Missions (IUGM), an association of nearly 250 rescue missions in the United States.

Ninety-two percent of respondents in the survey were male. The majority, 56%, of respondents were from the 31-to-45-year-old age bracket.

The rescue missions conducted the research by giving men and women at their facilities surveys to fill out and to return in a designated box or face down.



Golden Gate OK's African-American study

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP) — The faculty of Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., have approved a new master of divinity concentration in African American studies to better equip students for leadership in predominantly African American churches and communities.

The concentration, the first of its kind in Southern Baptist Convention seminaries, was developed by Leroy Gainey, associate professor of Christian education and intercultural studies and pastor of the multicultural First Baptist Church, Vacaville, Calif.

For more information about the concentration, contact Gainey at (415) 380-1542.

CHURCHMAN COOPERATIVE

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$25,000 & BELOW

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Merigold/Mid-Delta	\$ 3,189
Fellowship Mission/Pearl River	\$ 3,087
Walnut/North Delta	\$ 3,066
Smyrna/Copiah	\$ 2,998
Weathersby/Simpson	\$ 2,667
Bethlehem/Alcorn	\$ 2,631
Parks/North Central	\$ 2,596
Old Union/Tishomingo	\$ 2,344
Leaf/Green	\$ 2,286
Blue Lake/North Delta	\$ 2,278

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$25,000 - \$39,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Center Ridge/Kemper	\$ 7,000
Berwick/Mississippi	\$ 5,083
Linn/Mid-Delta	\$ 4,498
Calhoun/Covington-Jeff Davis	\$ 4,473
Oldtown/Calhoun	\$ 4,362
Lollars Grove/Webster	\$ 4,173
Elon/Noxubee	\$ 4,051
Pine Grove/Simpson	\$ 4,020
Enon/Winston	\$ 3,893
Sarepta/Franklin	\$ 3,786

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$40,000 - \$54,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Liberty/Lauderdale	\$ 9,462
New Hope/Webster	\$ 8,142
Emmanuel/Marion	\$ 7,147
Pilgrims Rest/Panola	\$ 6,534
Yale Street/Mid-Delta	\$ 6,434
Lula/North Delta	\$ 6,421
Hamburg/Franklin	\$ 6,392
Lake Como/Jasper	\$ 6,286
Pleasant Ridge/Chickasaw	\$ 6,250
Holy Bluff/Yazoo	\$ 6,004

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$55,000 - \$74,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Conehatta/Newton	\$11,185
Zion/Pontotoc	\$11,147
Hebron/North Central	\$ 9,685
Sabougla/Calhoun	\$ 9,479
Silver Springs/Pike	\$ 9,332
Myrtle/Union County	\$ 9,277
Branch/Scott	\$ 8,794
Riverside/Wayne	\$ 8,620
McCool/Attala	\$ 8,453
High Hill/Neshoba	\$ 8,344

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$75,000 - \$99,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
FBC, Sandhill/Greene	\$16,527
FBC, Anguilla/Sharkey-Issaquena	\$15,742
Cherry Creek/Pontotoc	\$15,692
Calvary/Winston	\$15,065
FBC, Stateline/Wayne	\$14,093
Morgan Chapel/Golden Triangle	\$13,009
Mt. Pisgah/Rankin	\$12,976
Mt. Moriah/Calhoun	\$12,746
Pine Grove/Jones	\$12,726
Scooba/Kemper	\$12,541

Church Offering Categories based on Total Receipts Reported on Annual Church Profile Letters (Oct. 96- Sept. 97)

CP: answering the call of Christ

By David Michel
MBCB Stewardship Director

To celebrate Cooperative Program Sunday the week following Easter seems at best anti-climatic. Financial matters seem so mundane compared to the spiritual victory promised by Christ's resurrection.

However, we read in Rev. 5:12, that when thousands of faithful believers in heaven see the risen, glorified Christ, they shout in unison: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!"

Wait — did they say, "riches?" Yes. Read it again. What better way could Mississippi Baptists respond to the resur-

rection of Christ than to increase their offerings through the Cooperative Program (CP)?

CP underwrites the work of over 9,000 missionaries worldwide, and results in over 100 baptisms per day. It provides Christian educational opportunities at the college and seminary levels for over 20,000 students. It encourages 2,000 churches to understand and utilize the best techniques and resources for effective ministry that are available.

The churches listed on this page have seen the value of CP giving. These 100 churches were chosen from among all those who gave through CP last year.

All churches were divided into ten categories based upon

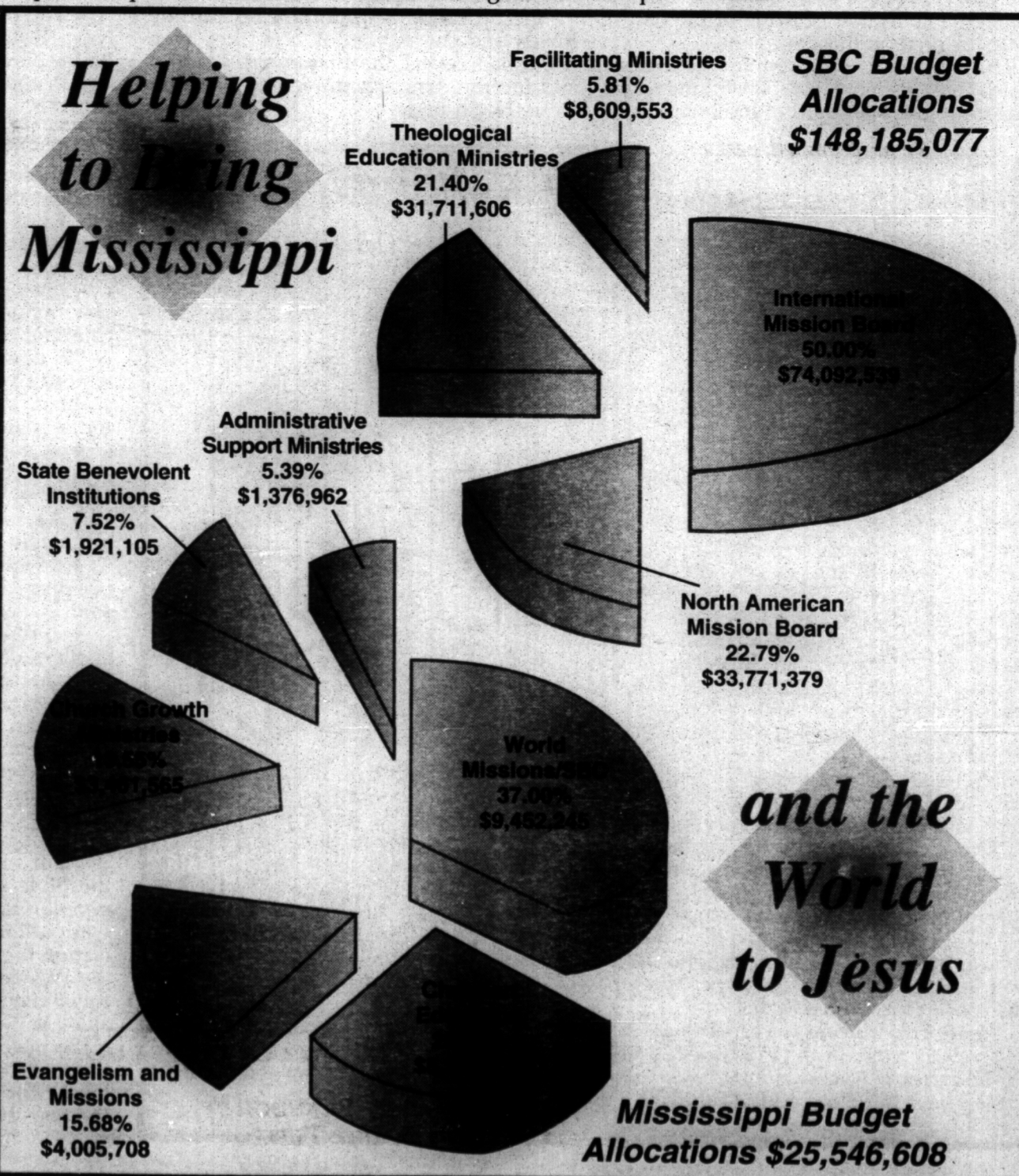
the amount of their total tithes and offerings. Most categories had approximately 200 churches.

The ten churches which gave the largest amount through CP in each category were selected for the list published on this page.

Ten different giving categories allow for the fairest recognition of the top one hundred churches in the state based upon their ability to give.

No church which gives systematically should feel left out or insignificant. Only as we combine our financial resources with one another can we grow toward success in the calling and commission of Christ.

Thanks be to God for all gifts committed to redeeming our world!



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM DAY

Miss. churches tops in SBC Top 100



FIRST CHURCH, JACKSON — #3 in SBC
Frank Pollard, pastor

"Every Christian is responsible to God to share the Gospel with the world. The Master's unmistakable mandate to 'Go into all the world' (Matthew 26:19) is a heart felt obligation to First Baptist Jackson. The Cooperative Program is the best way we know to obey the Great Commission."

BROADMOOR CHURCH, JACKSON — #28 in SBC
Jim Futral, pastor



Pollard "From the very first day that I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior (in fact, before I was saved), I was a part of a Southern Baptist Church that gave to the total mission cause of Christ through the Cooperative Program. I have grown in my relationship to the Cooperative Program."

"Initially, I was taught that this kind of giving was a grace, a wonderful work of God in our hearts that would cause us to give beyond ourselves."

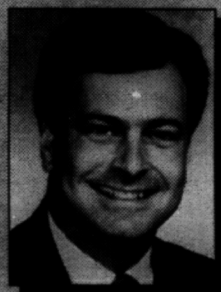
"Later, I began to realize that the money put in the plate, flowing through Baptist channels, would arrive at a place — a real place where a real work for the Lord would transpire."

"But now in the evolution of my understanding, I have come to think of an experience — the Cooperative Program as a face. I have a globe in my office that, from time to time, I turn to and in my imagination see people living on every point of the globe. I see a face and I celebrate what God has given to us through our Cooperative Program."

COLONIAL HEIGHTS CHURCH, JACKSON — #82 in SBC
Richard Powell, pastor

"Jesus said, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel' (Mark 16:15). He said that we should be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

"At Colonial Heights, we wholeheartedly support the Cooperative Program's mobilizing efforts to take the Gospel to every person for whom Christ died. As an individual church, we could not support such an effective and vast global strategy. But together, as cooperating Baptists, we certainly can! It is a blessing and a privilege to be part of history's greatest missions effort through the Cooperative Program. I truly believe God has given us this plan to unify and utilize us in his Kingdom's work."



Powell

MORRISON HEIGHTS CHURCH, CLINTON — #88 in SBC
Hal Kitchings, pastor



Kitchings

"My father, the late Dr. Harold T. Kitchings, taught me many important things about our denomination. He was a staunch believer in the Cooperative Program. So, I learned that as a Southern Baptist, it was my responsibility and privilege to support it. (I was even taught along the way that a church should give at least a tenth to the program. I believe that is an excellent gauge.) I am grateful to serve in a church that also has strong convictions about the Cooperative Program. Morrison Heights gives 13.5 percent. Why? There are so many reasons. In short, because it enhances spreading the gospel, and, if one does not support the Cooperative Program, why be a Southern Baptist? That's how I feel."

HARRISBURG CHURCH, TUPELO — #90 in SBC
Forrest Sheffield, pastor



Sheffield

"Why does a large portion of our undesignated budget go through the Cooperative Program? Our church believes it is the best means by which we Baptists do missionary, educational, and benevolent work in Mississippi, in the United States, and around the world. We believe the Cooperative Program concept is the most effective, practical, and economical plan for our worldwide missionary program as Southern Baptists."

Other Miss. churches in SBC Top 100

#6 FIRST CHURCH, BRANDON
#47 CALVARY CHURCH, TUPELO

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$100,000 - \$149,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Skene/Mid-Delta	\$29,309
Shiloh/Lawrence	\$28,571
Cato/Rankin	\$26,209
Springfield/Scott	\$24,634
Puckett/Rankin	\$23,777
Harmontown/Lafayette	\$23,283
Sylvarena/Smith	\$22,076
Union/Clarke	\$21,788
Big Creek/Calhoun	\$20,547
Summerland/Jones	\$20,376

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$150,000 - \$249,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Crowder/North Delta	\$51,065
Carrollton/Carroll	\$44,043
Bunker Hill/Marion	\$38,643
Ecru/Pontotoc	\$37,735
West Ripley/Benton-Tippah	\$34,879
Derma/Calhoun	\$34,046
FBC, Rolling Fork/Sharkey-Issaquena	\$32,575
Terry's Creek/Pike	\$32,229
New Prospect/Lincoln	\$30,607
FBC, Durant/Holmes	\$30,521

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$250,000 - \$499,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
Midway/Lauderdale	\$81,288
Forest/Scott	\$72,052
FBC, Coldwater/Northwest	\$68,878
FBC, Collinsville/Lauderdale	\$67,592
FBC Baldwin/Lee	\$65,035
East End/Golden Triangle	\$62,926
Woodlawn/Warren	\$61,713
FBC, Holly Springs/Marshall	\$61,365
Monticello/Lawrence	\$59,617
FBC, Calhoun City/Calhoun	\$57,672

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$500,000 - \$999,999

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
FBC, Winona/Montgomery	\$148,144
FBC, Batesville/Panola	\$143,612
FBC, Grenada/North Central	\$140,833
FBC, Yazoo City/Yazoo	\$137,215
FBC, Louisville/Winston	\$135,987
FBC, Amory/Monroe	\$122,603
Emmanuel/North Central	\$120,010
FBC, Kosciusko/Attala	\$115,857
West Heights/Pontotoc	\$115,266
FBC, Ripley/Benton-Tippah	\$111,806

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$1,000,000 & above

CHURCH/ASSOCIATION	CP GIFTS
FBC, Jackson/Metro	\$702,102
FBC, Brandon/Rankin	\$480,110
Broadmoor/Metro	\$373,135
Calvary/Lee	\$288,585
Colonial Heights/Metro	\$234,085
Harrisburg/Lee	\$231,801
Morrison Heights/Metro	\$224,327
FBC, Clinton/Metro	\$220,081
FBC, Columbus/Golden Triangle	\$219,114
Temple Hattiesburg/Lebanon	\$204,503

Church Offering Categories based on Total Receipts Reported on Annual Church Profile Letters (Oct. 96- Sept. 97)

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Highland Church, Vicksburg, recently held an Acteen Coronation with the theme "Friends Tell Friends About Jesus." Acteens (pictured, front row) are Whitney Joy Richardson, Mississippi Citation; Gina Harrison, Service Aide; Jessica Rickles, Queen Regent; (second row) Queen Regent Jennifer Jennings and Queen with Scepter Laura Steen; (third row) Queens with Scepter: Lauren Newton, Marla Richardson, Jessica Keown, Leighann VanDevender, Louann Amick, Brittany Breazeale, and Teri Burch; (fourth row) Queens: Nicole Bilbo, Mandie Ellis, Katie Jones, Brandy Fowler, Krystal Cochran, Monica Koehler, Amber Dunaway, Anna Larson, and Acteen Jana Jacobson. Jackie Richardson, Amanda Richardson, and Sonya Upton are leaders. Brian Ivey is pastor.

Highland Church, Laurel, will host a "Women Reaching Women" conference on April 25 with Monte Clendinning as guest speaker. Activities will include a continental brunch and conference from 10:30 a.m. - 12 noon. Clendinning is a conference coordinator for World

Missions Center. She has consulted to missionaries in Marriage and Family in the Baptist Missions of Western and Eastern Europe. She is also a contributing writer for "Women Reaching Women" (Women Ministries). For more information, call (601) 428-8493.

REVIVAL DATES

Mount Olive, Smithdale: April 26-29; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; George W. Lassett, Magnolia Springs, Ala., (former pastor in Mississippi) evangelist; Mark Calcote, Mount Olive Church, music; Michael L. Soesbe, pastor.

Old Union, Shannon: April 26-29; youth revival; Sunday, 8:45 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Albert Wilkerson, Ripley, evangelist; Steve White, Memphis, Tenn., music; Kenneth Kelly, pastor.

Belden, Belden: April 19-22; 7 p.m.; Tommy Vinson, Memphis, evangelist; Don Baggett, pastor.

Lemoyne Blvd., Biloxi: April 19-22; services, Sunday, 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. nightly; Todd Sumrall, Pascagoula, evangelist; Bill Renick, pastor.

Wade Church, Pascagoula, held its Leadership Banquet on March 21. Honored were Carol Rudolph, interim music director, and Dale Clark, teacher for 5th and 6th grade Sunday School. Rudolph, elected Woman of the Year, 1997, is pictured with Bill Brown, deacon and Brotherhood officer. Pictured with Clark, elected Man of the Year, 1997, is Susan Barfield, WMU president.



Barfield and Clark

Franklin Creek Church, Pascagoula, will sponsor a community party on April 18, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Forts Lake.

Newton County Crusade will be held April 26-30, 7 p.m., in the football stadium at East Central Community College, Decatur. For more information, call First Church, Newton, at (601) 683-2066 or 683-2067.



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Staff Changes

New Salem Church, Columbus, has called Roy Myers as interim pastor. Myers is currently living in West Point, after retiring from full-time pastoring in Dec. 1997. His last pastorate was Meadville Church, Meadville.

Valarie Collins Pickens became church/pastor secretary Feb. 16 at Southside Church, Yazoo City. Pickens is a graduate of Hinds Community College.

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ITEMS FOR SALE: First Baptist Church of Orange Grove is doing some extensive remodeling of our facilities. As a result we have several items that someone may have a need for. We will have approximately 500 yards of tan colored plush carpet, thirty twelve foot oak upholstered pews, an eight channel Peavey sound system with four large speakers, thirty fluorescent light fixtures, more than two-thousand square feet of drop ceiling frame and tiles, solid oak pulpit and communion table, and a Hammond A-100 organ with PR-40 external speakers. We are practically giving it away, so give us a call if you could use any of these items. The number to call is 288-832-2991.

WANTED: Part-time pastor in ranch community of mountain valley. Good position for person with home business, independently wealthy or semi-retired. Contact: Pastor Search Committee: Pitkin Avenue Baptist Church, PO Box 56, Saguache, CO 81149. Phone: (719) 655-2616.

ATTENTION: committed couples to work full-time with "at-risk" children in residential setting. Opportunities throughout Alabama. Minimum HS diploma. Benefits include BC/BS PMD, TDA, life insurance, sick leave, vacation, living expenses. Call 1-800-548-4256 or write to Box 240009 Montgomery, AL 36124-0009.

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SAXOPHONE LESSONS: Beginners and up. Metro Jackson area teacher. \$10 for 30 min.; \$18 an hour. Call Rick Sills, 601-924-2096.

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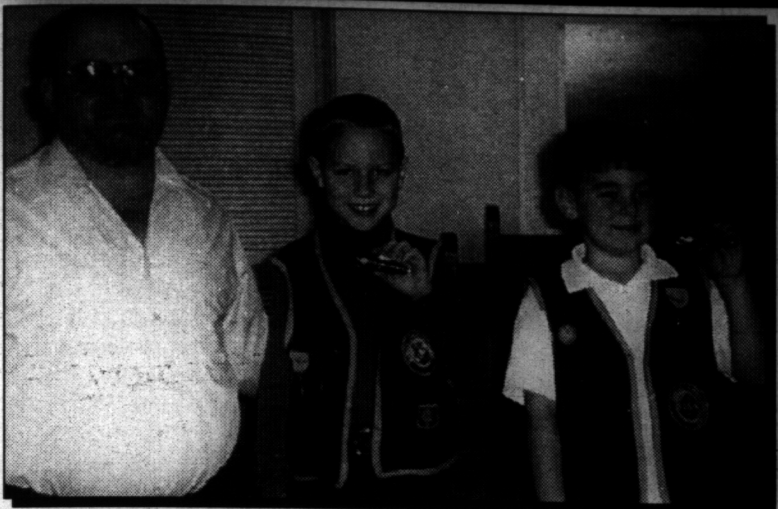
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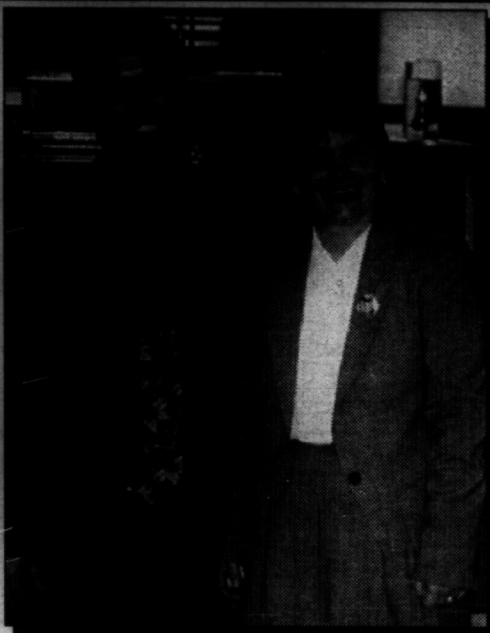
POSITION AVAILABLE: Full Time Minister of Youth (Grades 7-12) Calvary Baptist Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama is located adjacent to the University of Alabama campus. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve in a growing, multi-staff church. Youth Sunday School enrollment currently is 160. Average SS attendance 800+. Average worship attendance 1,200. Please send information to: Calvary Baptist Church, 1121 Paul Bryant Drive, Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401. (205) 758-0495.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH seeks a Director of Preschool and Children Ministries. Send resume to PO Box 59474, Birmingham, Alabama 35259.

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Vince Johnson and Nicholas Overton were presented with RA pocket knives on March 1 at Montgomery Church, Summit, for memorizing 25 Bible verses each. Both boys have earned bronze and silver medals for Scripture memory. Pictured (from left) are Tom Van Norman, leader; Overton; and Johnson.



The Baileys

Bryan Lee Bailey was recently ordained to the gospel ministry by Meadow Brook Church, Olive Branch. He completed his course of study in December 1997 at Southwestern Seminary. He is pastor of Yellow Leaf Church, Oxford. Bailey and his wife Sarah (pictured, left) are the parents of two sons, James and Andy.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



Barefoot Springs Church RAs

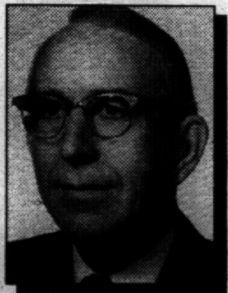


Barefoot Springs Church GAs

Woodrow W. Clark, former educator, dies

Woodrow Wilson Clark, 81, died March 31 of heart failure. Services were held April 3 at First Church, Clinton, with burial in Clinton cemetery. At his death, he was a member of Pocahontas Church, Jackson.

Clark was a Neshoba County native and a 40-year Clinton resident. He attended East Central Jr. College and Clark College.



Clark

Memorial College; received the B.A. degree and the M.S. degree from Mississippi College (MC); attended New Orleans Seminary and Southwestern Seminary; and received the Ed.D. degree from the University of Mississippi.

He pastored many Mississippi churches while teaching or administrating in educational institutions. He also served the denomination in the following positions: dean, William Carey College; director, Institutional Research, and acting dean, Graduate School, MC.

He was the widower of Ann Wilson Clark.

Survivors include: wife, Mary; son, Woodrow W. Clark Jr. of Portland, Ore.; daughters, Susan Clark Slaymaker of Gold River, Calif., Karen Clark of Bedford, Texas, Marianne Clark Gaudin and Jan Clark Bolton, both of Clinton; stepson, Dan W. Brown of Terry; stepdaughter, Mary Ann Smithhart of Polkville; brothers, Thomas Clark of Pearl, Roger Clark of Jackson, and Chester Clark of Neshoba; sisters, Hixie Clark Pittman of Jackson, and Johnnie Ruth Clark Smith of Neshoba; and 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

HOMEcomings

Union, Puckett: May 3; 10:45 a.m., noon meal in fellowship hall, 1:30 p.m.; One Accord, guest group, Mendenhall; Alvin Doyle, Morton, evangelist; Brent Bozeman, pastor.

Harmony (Carroll): April 26; 120th anniversary; 10:30 a.m.; dinner on grounds; Cemetery Association meeting; Ken Gower, Gruger, speaker.

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First Baptist Church
San Antonio, TX

EVENTS 2 & 3

June 15-19 and

June 19-22

Sal Sberna
Metropolitan
Baptist Church
Houston, TX

EVENT 4

June 22-26

D.L. Lowrie

First Baptist Church
Lubbock, TX

❖ Smaller membership church track Events 3 & 4

❖ Special education lab school Events 1 & 2

❖ Special education leadership training Events 1, 2, 3 & 4

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College News

Evening classes to be offered at Mississippi College (MC) are "Conversational Spanish," April 30-May 28, and "Introduction to Sculpture," April 21-May 19. MC will also offer "Smart Gardening" with Nell Neuman, garden columnist, April 21-May 19. For more information call the Office of Continuing Education at (601) 925-3301.

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FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

A time for accountability

Mark 12:1-12

By Grace Graham

Provision (12:1). Many people take for granted advantages others have provided for them. Jesus told a parable in which a person planted a vineyard and rented it to husbandmen. This story follows the final refusal by the Pharisees to consider seriously the source of Jesus' authority. They refused to admit the fact that they knew the source already. Jesus' response was to tell this parable of judgement.

He told of a man who planted a vineyard, set a hedge around it, dug a pit for the wine press, built a tower, and let it out to tenants. The hedge or wall that surrounded it as well as the tower provided protection of the vineyard from wild animals or outlaws.

The tower may have been a shelter for the tenants. The pit was the trough into which the juice was filtered from the mashed grapes.

Tenants rented a vineyard for a share crop. The owner did not stay close to observe. He went on a journey into another country.

Jesus' audience of religious leaders surely recognized the background of this story as Isaiah 5:1-7. The hearers knew from the Isaiah passage that Jesus was referring to Israel; referring to them, in fact.

It was also evident that the Lord himself was the owner and provider. All of the details of the care and preparation of the vineyard are described in Isaiah.

God still provides us with

benefits and opportunities to supply all of our needs. Thank him today for each occasion given you to reap the benefit of his care.

Patience (12:2-5). The owner sent three servants to get fruit from the vineyard. The first was beaten and sent away empty-handed. The

second was wounded in the head. The third was killed. The master showed great tolerance.

Notice the progression of the treatment of each servant. Sin advances in this manner. A minor violation with the next encounter.

The creator and owner of the vineyard was a very patient man. The very character of God allows him this lingering patience. He gives us every chance to come to him for forgiveness and gives opportunities for us to make choices in agreement with his leading.

Plot (12:6-8). The owner then

sent his "beloved son" assuming that he would command the respect of the tenants. It is highly unlikely that Mark's readers would not identify the term "beloved son" with Jesus, who was called God's beloved Son at the baptism.

The law stated that the property of an absent owner who died without a will would become ownerless property. Whoever occupied the property at that time had a claim. The tenants killed the owners son and threw him out of the vineyard for their own personal gain.

Punishment (12:9-12). What did the owner do? The tenants deserved to be destroyed. Jesus turned to the scriptures to drive home his meaning.

Psalm 118:22-23 states "the very stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes." This quotation is to show us that this plan is nothing new. It is God's eternal plan. He is

consistent when dealing with us. Jesus began this quote by asking, "have you not read the scripture?" Isn't it ironic that he should ask that of the men whose profession it was to study the Old Testament?

Jesus' message to the scribes and Pharisees was clear. They did not kill the son because they failed to recognize him. That could have been forgiven. They did recognize him for who he was and still rejected him.

The Pharisees now regarded Jesus as a dangerous revolutionary. He seemed to rouse the crowds against them. They wanted to seize him but were afraid of the multitude.

Jesus, the rejected stone, is now the foundation of the building which is the new temple, the Christian church. Do you recognize the Son? Examine your relationship with God through Jesus. Judgement is sure for those who reject his Son.

Graham is Childhood Education Director at First Church, Gulfport.

LIFE AND WORK

The basis for right and wrong

Genesis 3:1-6; Isaiah 5:20-21; Malachi 2:17; Mark 10:17-31; 1 John 1:5; 1 Peter 1:15-16

By Jim Burnett

"God said it, I believe it, and that settles it." To the unbelieving, pagan people of the world today who make their own rules and manufacture their own truths, these are the words of an ignorant, religious fanatic.

Today we begin a much-needed three-week study entitled "Deciding Right from Wrong." Americans seem to be suffering from spiritual amnesia. There is little awareness of God in society and no tolerance of his Word in school or government. Who's the blame for our country's spiritual demise? Why is their such a cloud of doubt hanging over the plausi-

bility of the Bible? Why are there no longer any moral absolutes? Is the problem in the White House or church house?

God's people must receive new convictions concerning God's word, for the brand of Christianity being practiced prostitutes the word of God making us odious to our creator. We must stop attempting to please this world and ourselves by diluting the Bible. "The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it." Neither does truth blush. God is the appropriate authority in defining and determining right and wrong and he has done so in what we know

as the Bible. Therefore, our task is not to change the truth but proclaim it, love it, and live it.

We do not determine right and wrong (Gen. 3:1-6). Eve became Satan's first human victim as she swallowed the serpent's lie "hook, line, and sinker." How did this happen? Eve and Adam

fell prey to Satan the moment they allowed their adversary to bring into question the word of God. My friends, to question the integrity of God and his word is spiritual suicide. Many so-called Christians today treat the laws and principles of our Lord as if it were a buffet. No wonder the church is having such little impact on a lost world. We've been feeding on half-truths too long.

Only God is good (Mark 10:17-18; 1 John 1:5). Society's spiritual demise today can quickly be traced to man's futile attempt to find a viable

substitute or replacement for the standards of God. Jesus rebuked the rich man for his brassy statement, which smacked of humanism. Referring to Jesus as good teacher, this man foolishly presumed he was capable of determining, from his own intellect, the proper moral standards. Only the born-again have the capacity for knowing the mind of Christ and ability for discerning what is right and wrong.

God is the basis for right and wrong (1 Peter 1:15-16). Why should Christians strive to be holy and pure? Is it so God will one day let us into heaven? Is it so we can escape hell? Emphatically, no! Being holy is a byproduct of being right with Christ. Like a little boy that longs to be like his dad, trailing him wherever he goes, mimicking his daddy's gestures, we too want to be like our heavenly father. And to be like God is to be right, good, holy, true, and pure.

Human standards often are counter to God's standard (Isaiah 5:20-21; Mal 2:17). The laws of the land today reflect an undeniable apostasy in America. A reversal in values is taking place. What the Bible deems wicked and evil, culture calls good and wholesome. Public opinion polls, majority rule, and legislation today determine the standards of society. But the consequences of altering the word of God are serious: "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God." And yet this is our destiny if we continue to replace the standard of God with the standards of men. The word of God, as someone has said, is an anvil that has worn out many hammers. You can criticize it, rewrite it, disobey it, doubt it, but you will never change God's eternal word. You will never replace his eternal standard.

Burnett is pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Spirit-filled witnesses

Acts 2:4, 14-17, 32-33, 36-38, 41, 46-47

By Harold W. Simmons

This week we begin another unit of study in the survey of the New Testament. Luke picked up the story of the resurrected Lord in the book of Acts and quickly moved to the ascension of the Risen Christ. We move from the life and ministry of Jesus to a focus on the life and growth of the church. In the context of chapter 2, God sends the Holy Spirit who empowers the church for its mission.

Empowered by the Spirit (2:4, 14-17, 32-33) The coming of the Holy Spirit was a wonderment not only to the church but to non-believers who were also

witnesses to the event. The coming of the Holy Spirit was not some subjective happening in the confines of the church gathered. I believe God wanted the church and the world to know that something different had happened. The believers were transformed from a frightened little band of people into a powerful, purposeful, expanding group. People from many parts of the world would return home and tell of the miraculous event of Pentecost. God was at work preparing the "soil" for the seeds of the gospel that will be planted later as missionaries move out from Judea

and Samaria to the uttermost parts of the world. The visitors to Jerusalem could doubtless have understood had the believers spoken in Koine Greek. God spoke to each language and ethnic group in their own language through the believers for unmistakable clarity.

But God does not forget about the here and now. He empowered Peter to stand, quote scripture, and explain the unusual happening. Notice that God promised the Spirit in the Old Testament. The Spirit of God is not new at Pentecost, but rather he comes in a new fashion because he comes as an abiding presence and power in the lives of the believers.

Conviction, repentance, and baptism (2: 36-38, 41). This section of scripture demonstrates the work and power of the Holy

Spirit in the life of the unbeliever as he convicts (cut to the heart) them of sin. The unbelievers earnestly sought to do what God wanted. They asked the apostles what they needed to do. The instructions were to be sorry for their sin and turn from it. The instructions were crystal clear and three thousand responded that day.

Life and growth of the church (2:46-47). I'm sure that we do not have all the actions of the believers here in these verses. I am sure that we have some of the more important activities. Note that all the believers took part in the church ministries. They all met together in the temple courts for worship. They fellowshiped together in their several homes. Luke told us that they had a great time together (glad hearts) and there was no shame (with sincere hearts). The believers had

something that appealed to all people. Their whole life demonstrated a happiness and peace that helped cultivate others for evangelism. They were so effective that the Lord was adding souls to the church each day.

The Bible speaks to us. The coming of the Holy Spirit is in a different manner than he had touched mankind before this time. Jesus promised the Spirit of God as an abiding presence. He is the power for being an effective witness and for living a righteous life. The Holy Spirit works for conviction in the hearts of all people as he illuminates the sin in the lives of believer and non-believer alike. Finally, cultivative evangelism is an extremely effective method for reaching people, particularly when there are daily converts.

Simmons is pastor of Hebron Church, Grenada.

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Maxine Perkins, child care worker at the Farrow Manor campus in Independence, has received her one-year service pin.



Peggy and Bill Tate, child care workers at the Farrow Manor campus in Independence, have received their one-year service pins.

So. Baptist lay leader wins Okla. City race

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. (BP)—Southern Baptist layman Kirk Humphreys was elected mayor of Oklahoma City April 7 by a two-thirds margin.

Humphreys, a member of the Northwest Fellowship of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, received 28,800 votes or 67.6% of votes cast in a race with Guy Liebmann, a city councilman.

Humphreys is a former trustee chairman of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and has held numerous leadership roles through the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. He also served eight years on the Putnam City School Board.

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REL P ONOGOT: HFOTH-
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Clue: F = W

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Eighteen Sixteen.

New Ager introduced to power of prayer

SEDONA, Ariz. (BP) — Sometimes the most effective personal evangelism happens when the only relevant conversation occurs between God and the evangelist.

Such was the case with Marcia Montenegro, an astrologer with more than a decade of experience sampling a broad range of what New Age spirituality had to offer.

The prayers of a casual acquaintance resulted in God alone leading her to the truth of Scripture, at a time when her growing hatred of Christianity might have rebuffed more conventional approaches.



Montenegro

"To me that shows that God wants us to pray for people," she recently told a group of Southern Baptist interfaith witness leaders. "Nobody is beyond the reach of God, no matter how hardened you are and how hostile you are."

Montenegro, who now operates the ministry, "Christian Answers for the New Age" out of her home in Arlington, Va., shared her testimony at the March 21-24 annual meeting of the North American Mission Board's interfaith witness state coordinators in Sedona, Ariz.

Montenegro said she went through "her religious period" as a young teenager, going to church with her mother while her agnostic father stayed home.

"That's what I thought being a Christian was," she said. "You went to church, read the Bible, did everything you could. ... and if you did enough, you would get to heaven."

Her faith had faded by the end of high school, and an exploration into other beliefs expanded in college.

Eventually she became interested in astrology, and over a period of eight years developed into one of Atlanta's most respected astrologists, serving as president of the Metropolitan Atlanta Astrological Society.

During the same period, she said, her hatred of Christianity and interest in death both grew. "Those two things, for me, are probably hallmarks of the occult, and probably New Age also," she said.

Her belief structure made it all the more baffling when she began feeling a "compulsion" to go to church. She soon found herself in a Protestant church.

"I experienced what I call a waterfall of love falling on me from above. ... This was not like a warm fuzzy feeling because of the music or anything like that. This was like 'bam!' It almost knocked me off my feet. I started crying," she said.

It was four months later that she found out why God had intervened so dramatically in her life. She was talking with a co-worker at her part-time job about her experience, when he developed a "funny little smile on his face."

"He had been praying for me with a group at his church during 1990. I didn't find this out until April of 1991, and I was just totally overwhelmed by that. ... I just wanted to reach up and kiss him."

Now a member of an unaffiliated Baptist church in Arlington, Va., she has a ministry of teaching Christians about the New Age movement and directly witnessing to adherents.

Through a booth at several New Age fairs, for instance, their interest in all religions gives her opportunities to share the biblical gospel.

Montenegro likes to ask individuals about their own "spiritual path" and their spiritual goals. It is then that she finds opportunities to see where they are hurting and to explain the freedom and joy found in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

"I think the best thing to do is listen to someone talk about what they believe, and pray. Because I really believe if you are listening compassionately ... they are going to say something that is going to be a clue to you to have an opening to share the gospel," she said.

One girl involved in pagan witchcraft, for instance, shared of her own spiritual fatigue. "I have been through so many lives and I have so many lives to go through. People don't understand how difficult it is," the girl told her.

Montenegro was then able to share how there is one belief system that doesn't require constant working to achieve perfection.

"All these New Age systems are always salvation by works, and if nothing else, you can use that as an entry point," she said.

She also advises Christians to overcome the desire to poke fun, even among themselves, at the beliefs and practices of New Age adherents. Such comments can alienate the individual from future encounters with the gospel, and serve to make Christians less sensitive to reaching out to those in need.

"It makes it easy to harden your heart," she said.

New Age movement offers historical challenges

SEDONA, Ariz. (BP) — Christians confronting the New Age movement face many of the same challenges as their counterparts confronting various forms of paganism in the early church, an author and seminary professor told a group of interfaith witness leaders.

"We have the capability through the gospel to impact individuals who have bought into the paganism of Greece and Rome, whether it be New Age paganism or materialistic paganism," said H. Wayne House, professor of Bible and theology at Michigan Theological Seminary and author of several books on world religions.



House

"If you remember, the early churches dealt with the same things we are dealing with, and the gospel won," he said.

House was one of the several speakers at the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) March 21-24 annual meeting for state interfaith witness evangelism coordinators.

John Newport, distinguished professor emeritus of philosophy of religion at Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, provided an overview of the movement based on his

recently published book, "The Worldview Crisis and the New Age Movement" (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich.)

In analyzing the impact of the New Age, he noted such areas as the modern feminist movement, which at its extremes has been fueled by ancient goddess religions that fostered the empowerment of women.

Newport explained how the most radical environmental and animal rights activists have as their basis the pantheistic and monistic worldview that everything is linked by a divine, universal energy force.

Newport also pointed out one central aspect of New Age belief is the idea of "transformation," that man can through his own efforts achieve increasingly higher spiritual states.

"It's all based on the same idea that we can become divine — we do not need a Savior, we do not need the basic thing that is present in Christianity," he said.

House said this view of mankind also leads to an absence of any ethical framework.

"If we are God, and if man and God are essentially the same thing with all of their realities, then you cannot argue ethics because there can be no

right and wrong," he said.

For more information, contact the NAMB interfaith witness evangelism team at (770) 410-6332.

New Age: odd blend of beliefs

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — The New Age movement can be described as a blend of eastern religions, paganism, humanism, and the occult. Groups and individuals who would align with many of its tenets often reject the term, "New Age," preferring to be known as "spiritual seekers." New Age beliefs and practices commonly are presented not as religion but as secular, scientific, or self-help tools or philosophies.

PANTHEISM — God is All and All is God. Everything that exists is a part of a universal "God." Since everything is God, each individual is also God. While adherents talk of God in personal terms, most understand him as ultimately impersonal. God is often referred to as a force or energy.

MONISM — All is One: Everything that exists is One. All distinctions — including the individual's sense of being distinct from everyone and everything else — are really illusions. This is a central belief in contemporary witchcraft, many eastern religions, neo-paganism and the growing environmental awareness movement. Monism is closely related to Pantheism.

REINCARNATION — After we die we will be reborn as a baby and live another life. Repeated cycles of birth, life, and death are necessary in order to lose the illusion of separateness from the All. We progress toward this Oneness, in the Hindu expression, by acquiring positive "karma" — the fruit of our life and actions that are carried by the soul to its next life.

COMING NEW AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT — As individuals evolve spiritually, our world is also about to undergo a transformation to a higher level. This change will be brought about by a shift in human consciousness toward New Age concepts of viewing the world.

PEOPLE ARE DIVINE — The sensation of existing as finite creatures is an illusion, and people need to be enlightened about their true divinity in order to evolve spiritually. Exercises intended to transform consciousness — such as yoga, meditation, past-life regression, and supernatural experiences — can help one attain enlightenment.

MORALITY IS RELATIVE — Since all is one, there is no difference between good and evil, right and wrong.

The man Jesus is separated from the Christ Spirit — Jesus was only one of several great teachers who obtained the Christ Spirit (self-actualization of one's deity).

Source: NAMB Interfaith Witness Dept.